



NMFS Announces a Public Meeting For Selected Participants of the 2013 Shark Research Fishery

We announce the date and time of a mandatory conference call to discuss with selected participants the permit terms and conditions for the 2013 shark research fishery.

Shark research fishery permits are issued annually and authorize participation in the shark research fishery and the collection of sandbar, non-sandbar large coastal sharks LCS, small coastal shark, and pelagic sharks from federal waters in the Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, and Caribbean Sea, for the purposes of scientific data collection, subject to 100 percent observer coverage. Interested shark fishermen can apply to participate in the research fishery each year.

On November 13, 2012 (77 FR 67631), we published a notice inviting qualified commercial shark permit holders to submit an application to participate in the 2013 shark research fishery. We received 13 applications, of which 12 applicants were determined to meet all the qualifications. From the 12 qualified applicants, we randomly selected 6 participants after considering how to meet research objectives in particular regions.

Every year, the permit terms and permitted activities (e.g., number of hooks and trips, retention limits) specifically authorized for selected participants in the shark research fishery are designated depending on the scientific and research needs of the Agency as well as the number of NMFS-approved observers available. In order to inform selected participants of this year's specific permit requirements and ensure all terms and conditions of the permit are met, we are holding a mandatory meeting with selected participants. **The conference call will be held on March 18, 2013, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. (EST). Participants and interested parties should call 888-989-4986 and use the passcode 4136438. Selected participants who do not attend will not be allowed to participate in the shark research fishery.** While the conference call is mandatory for selected participants, other interested parties may call in and listen to the discussion. Selected participants are encouraged to invite their captain, crew, or anyone else who may assist them in meeting the terms and conditions of the shark research fishery permit.

This notice is a courtesy to individuals interested in Highly Migratory Species fisheries activities to keep you informed about the fishery. Official notice of Federal fishery actions is made through filing such notice with the Office of the Federal Register. For further information, contact Karyl Brewster-Geisz or Delisse Ortiz at (301) 427-8503.

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